

CPEC

Projected Enrollment Demand at California's Independent Colleges and Universities

California Postsecondary Education Commission
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The California Postsecondary Education Commission has recently completed a series of enrollment demand projections for higher education in California. The projections show that enrollment demand at the independent universities will grow to 150,000 students by 2019, an increase of nearly 21,000 from current levels. Although UC and CSU account for 80% of undergraduate enrollments in the state, growth at independent universities can make a significant contribution to California's need for more university places. The increase in enrollment projected for the independents is comparable to the increase in enrollment demand projected for the UC system.

Implications

CPEC's enrollment demand projections for the public systems show that if California is to restore access to higher education at the level it was before the recent recession, UC and CSU will be asked to serve 74,000 more students in 2019 than they did in 2008. Studies by the Public Policy Institute of California indicate that university enrollments might need to increase even more than this for California to produce enough university graduates to meet workforce needs as the state's economy recovers.

The independent universities could take some enrollment pressure off UC and CSU and help increase degree production in California. The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) has indicated that many of its 76 member institutions could accommodate additional students and that enrollments could increase more than indicated by CPEC's projections.

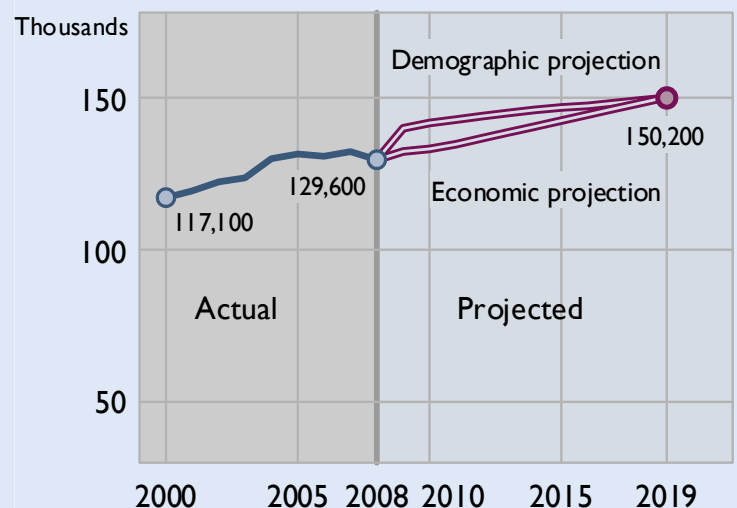
Policymakers will need to assess whether the state should take action to encourage more enrollment at the independents. Financial aid can make these institutions an affordable option for many students.

Enrollment Demand

	Independent universities	University of California	California State University
2008 enrollment	129,600	172,800	362,200
2019 projection	150,200	193,000	416,100
Increase	20,600 15.9%	20,200 11.7%	53,900 14.9%

Undergraduate headcount students, fall term. Enrollment demand is an estimate of the number of students who would enroll if fees were maintained at the level prevailing in the early 2000s and if enrollment growth were not constrained by state funding.

Growth at the Independent Universities



Greater availability of Cal Grants could be part of funding for more enrollment at UC and CSU is likely.

CPEC plans to work with AICCU to analyze the capacity available at the independent universities and assess the factors that affect future enrollment levels. CPEC will also examine how fees and financial aid affect the ability of students to enroll at independent universities and develop recommendations on how the state can work with the independent colleges and universities to help meet California's growing needs for higher education.

Background on the Estimates

Staff made the enrollment demand projections for 2009 to 2019 using a demographic model and an economic model. Both models gave similar results, but the demographic model gave slightly higher estimates for the earlier years of the projection period. In the demographic model, staff derived college participation rates by dividing actual enrollments from 2000 to 2008 by the population aged 18 to 49. Participation rates were estimated separately for ethnic groups and for the different types of independent institution. These rates were projected forward based on historical average rates of growth and consideration of other factors influencing college-going. Enrollment demand for 2009 to 2019 was estimated using population projections from the Department of Finance.

In the economic model, staff used a series of regression analyses to establish a relationship between enrollments from 2000 through 2008 and California personal income, unemployment rates, and Cal Grant levels. Future enrollment demand was estimated using these relationships and projections of personal income and unemployment.

Independent Colleges and Universities

California's independent colleges and universities are non-profit foundations accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Nearly all of these institutions are members of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities. The independents are a diverse group of institutions. Many are comprehensive institutions or liberal arts colleges emphasizing teaching to the bachelor's or master's level, some are major research universities, and others are art colleges or professional schools.

In addition to the independent universities, California has many other private colleges and universities. These are for-profit universities, such as the University of Phoenix and DeVry University, and specialized colleges accredited by agencies other than WASC, with degree programs in fields such as health care, business, and criminal justice. These colleges and universities are not included in CPEC's projections.

CPEC's Enrollment Demand Estimates

Full details of the enrollment demand projections for the independents are in a report by CPEC analysts Stacy Wilson, Ryan Fuller, and Mallory Newell, *Ready for Learning: The Contribution of California's Independent Colleges and Universities in Meeting Undergraduate Demand*, September 2010.

www.cpec.ca.gov/completereport/2010reports/10-17.pdf

Projections for the three public systems are in *Ready or Not, Here They Come: Undergraduate Enrollment Demand and Capacity Projections*, June 2010.

www.cpec.ca.gov/completereports/2010reports/10-08.pdf